

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-06 PER-01 CA-01 A-01 MMO-01
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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9588

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CGEN, AMGT, CE

SUBJ: CONSULAR AGENT IN MALDIVES

REF: STATE 033815; 2 FAM 410

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: WHILE IN MALDIVES FEBRUARY 8-12, DCM
INFORMALLY EXPLORED WITH GOVERNMENT OF MALDIVES (GOM) OFFI-
CIALS, RESIDENT AMERICANS AND OTHERS POSSIBILITY OF ESTAB-
LISHING CONSULAR AGENCY. EMBASSY'S CONCLUSION IS THAT OPEN-
ING OF CONSULAR AGENCY NOW IN USG INTEREST. END SUMMARY.

2. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED
THE EMBASSY HAS DETERMINED THAT THE OPENING OF A CONSULAR AGENCY
IN MALE, REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES IS A MODEST EXPENDITURE APPRO-
PRIATE TO AMERICAN POLICY AND OTHER INTERETS IN THAT COUNTRY.
WHILE NO HONORARY CONSULS OR SIMILAR ESTABLISHMENTS ARE NOW
MAINTAINED IN MALDIVES, THE GOM HAS INDICATED THEY WOULD WEL-
COME A FORMAL USG REQUEST TO OPEN A CONSULAR AGENCY. FOLLOW-
ING IS A REVIEW OF FACTORS PERTINENT TO SUCH A DECISION
ON THE PART OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS.

A. HISTORY

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THE USG HAS NEVER BEEN REPRESENTED IN THE MALDIVES. INSOFAR
AS WE CAN DETERMINE FROM EMBASSY COLOMBO RECORDS, THIS POST
HAS ALWAYS HAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROTECTION OF OUR INTERESTS
THERE. THE GOM FOR A SHORT PERIOD DID MAINTAIN AN EMBASSY
IN WASHINGTON, D.C. THE GOM DOES NOT NOW MAINTAIN ANY DIP-
LOMATIC OR CONSULAR ESTABLISHMENTS ABROAD OR ACCREDIT ANY DIP-
LOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES EXCEPT FOR ITS SMALL MISSION TO THE

UN IN NEW YORK. IN ORDER TO MEET ITS SHIPPING NEEDS, THE GOM HAS HONORARY CONSULS IN KARACHI AND ATHENS WHO ARE LOCAL NATIONALS.

B. POLICY ADVANTAGES TO USG

GOM OFFICIALS HAVE MANIFESTED TOUS THEIR BEWILDERMENT AT USG POLICY TOWARD MALDIVES SINCE 1965 INDEPENDENCE. IN THEIR VIEW, GOM IS "SINCERELY" NON-ALIGNED COUNTRY WHICH HAS TRIED TO BE COOPERATIVE WITH USG AT UN AND DEVOTE ITS MEAGER DOMESTIC RESOURCES EXCLUSIVELY TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THEY ASK WHY USG "IGNORES" MALDIVE ECONOMIC NEEDS, WHEN USG IS SO GENEROUS WITH LESS FRIENDLY "INSINCERE" NON-ALIGNED STATES. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT OPENING OF CONSULAR AGENCY WOULD MANIFEST TO GOM FACT THAT USG WISHES INCREASE COMMUNICATION AND OUR KNOWLEDGE OF MALDIVES WHICH COULD PROVIDE BASIS FOR VERY MODEST ASSISTANCE.

C. REPORTING NEEDS

EMBASSY COLOMBO NOW LACKS ADEQUATE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION TO OBTAIN INFORMATION NECESSARY TO FULFILL EVEN MINIMUM REPORTING REQUIREMENTS. THE SINGLE WEEKLY ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWS-PAPER, OF COMMUNITY GOSSIP COLUMN FORMAT, AND THE LOW POWERED RADIO STATION DO NOT FILL THIS GAP. CONSULAR AGENCY, MANNED BY LOCAL NATIONAL, WOULD NATURALLY LIMIT TYPE OF INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS THAT COULD BE LEVIED. HOWEVER, CONSULAR AGENT RESPONSIBLE TO USG WOULD ENHANCE OUR ACCESSIBILITY TO GOM ECOOMIC PLANS, DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND BIOGRAPHIC DATA. ALL THESE ARE NECESSARY PREREQUISITES FOR US TO SUSTAIN EVEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MINIMAL NECESSARY DIALOGUE BETWEEN VISITING USG OFFICIALS AND GOM. THERE ARE NO STRATEGIC MATERIALS KNOWN TO EXIST IN THE MALDIVES. THE GOM HAS TAKEN THE POSITION THAT IT WILL NOT LEASE THE FORMER RAF BASE AT GAN TO ANY OF THE GREAT POWERS. A CONSULAR AGENT WOULD BE LIKELY TO BECOME AWARE OF ANY FOREIGN INTEREST IN GAN SINCE ALL VISITORS TO GAN MUST PASS THROUGH MALE, AND IT IS A VERY SMALL COMMUNITY.

D. COMMERICAL INTERESTS

THERE ARE NO KNOWN AMERICAN COMMERCIAL INTERESTS OF ANY KIND IN THE MALDIVES. THERE ARE NO AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN RESIDENT IN THE MALDIVES AND ONLY TWO IN SRI LANKA. NO AMERICAN AIRLINES OR SHIPPING LINES MAINTAIN OFFIES IN THESE TWO COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN ELEVEN TOURIST HOTELS BUILT WITHIN THE LAST FEW YEARS IN THE MALDIVES, THE AIRPORT IS CURRENTLY BEING EXPANDED TO RECEIVE THE LARGER JETS, A TELEVISION STATION HAS BEEN INSTALLED AND WILL START BROADCASTING NEXT MONTH, A NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION FACILITY IS NOW FULLY OPERABLE PROVIDING DIRECT DISTANCE DIALING TO NEW YORK, ETC. THE GOM DOES NOT ADVERTISE FOR TENDERS BUT INVITES BIDS ON PROJECTS, ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN ON A COMMERICAL BASIS. GOM OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD US THAT SUCH INVITATIONS WOULD BE DIRECTED TO A CONSULAR AGENT IN MALE.

E. CONSULAR SERVICES

WE HAVE ALREADY HAD ONE AMERICAN CITIZEN ARRESTED AND SENTENCED FOR SELLING DRUGS IN THE MALDIVES. HE WAS RELEASED IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL FOR CLEMENCY TO PRESIDENT NASIR. MALDIVE TOURIST STATISTICS ARE UNFORTUNATELY LACKING. HOWEVER, IT IS OBVIOUS TO ANY VISITOR THAT TOURISM IS BOOMING AND THAT AMERICANS ARE ARRIVING IN INCREASING NUMBERS. EMBASSY COLOMBO'S ABILITY TO FULFILL ITS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IS SEVERELY HAMPERED BY POOR AIRLINE SERVICE AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN MALE AND COLOMBO. THERE ARE NO LAWYERS IN THE MALDIVES. THE RECENT LENGTHY, EMBARRASSING AND EXPENSIVE EFFORT OF FRG EMBASSY IN COLOMBO IN ARRANGING FOR THE SHIPMENT OF A DECEASED GERMAN CITIZEN FROM MALE TO GERMANY HAS UNDERSCORED FOR US THE DESIRABILITY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF HAVING A MUTUALLY RECOGNIZED REPRESENTATIVE IN MALE WHO COULD ACT QUICKLY AND AUTHORITATIVELY FOR OUR DIRECTION IN SUCH SITUATIONS.

F. CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

WE RECOGNIZE THE PLACE THAT A MODEST CULTURAL ACTIVITIES EFFORT HAS IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND A SMALL DEVELOPING COUNTRY LIKE THE MALDIVES. IN RECENT YEARS A FEW STUDY OR SEMINAR FELLOWSHIPS HAVE BEEN OFFERED TO THE MALDIVES, SOME OF WHICH THE MALDIVIANS HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO UTILIZE. IN FY78 WE HAVE BEEN ALLOTTED ONE IVP GRANT FOR THE MALDIVES. HOWEVER, THE EXPENSE OF SENDING OUR CULTURAL AFFAIRS OFFICER TO THE MALDIVES TO INTERVIEW APPLICANTS, INVESTIGATE OPPORTUNITIES, ETC., HAS BEEN AN INHIBITING FACTOR IN SELECTING GRANTEEES AND ARRANGING PROGRAMS. A CONSULAR AGENCY WOULD PROVIDE US WITH A KNOWLEDGEABLE LOCAL PERSON TO DO MANY OF THE ELEMENTARY TASKS REQUIRED TO CARRY FORWARD A LIMITED NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES.

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G. INFORMATION PROGRAM

USIS IS IN THE PROCESS OF EXPANDING ITS MALDIVES MAILING LIST AND AID, THROUGH CARE, IS CONTRIBUTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS TO THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM WHICH IS CONDUCTED IN ENGLISH. THERE ARE THREE LIBRARIES IN MALDIVES, AND THE GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO INCREASE ITS OWN HOLDINGS. THIS IS ANOTHER AREA WHERE A KNOWLEDGEABLE CONSULAR AGENT COULD PROVIDE US WITH INFORMATION THERWISE UNAVAILABLE TO FACILITATE A SMALL PROGRAM. NOVOSTI/TASS MAINTAIN A FREE TELEPRINTER SERVICE IN MALE.

H. MALDIVIAN REQUIREMENTS FOR US CONSULAR SERVICES

GOM OFFICIALS HAVE POLITELY DEPLORED TO US THE CURRENT INCONVENIENCE OF OVERNIGHTING IN COLOMBO ENROUTE TO THE UN IN ORDER TO GET VISAS FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES. ONE REASON FOR GOM INTEREST IN A US CONSULAR AGENCY IS THAT THE US VISA FORMS COULD BE STOCKED IN MALE AND GOM OFFICIAL PASSPORTS WOULD GO VIA OUR DIPLOMATIC POUCH TO COLOMBO FOR VISAING AND RETURN. A NEW AIR SERVICE FROM MALE TO TRIVANDRUM, INDIA, MAKES THIS POSSIBILITY OF VISAS THROUGH A CONSULAR AGENCY IN MALE EVEN MORE DESIRABLE IN GOM EYES.

I. OTHER USG AGENCY INTERESTS

WE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

STATE - PROTECTION, WELFARE, VISAS, BIOGRAPHIC AND POLITICAL
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AND ECONOMIC REPORTING

USIS - CULTURAL AND INFORMATION

COMMERCE - OBTAINING TENDERS FOR US COMPANIES TO BID ON GOM CONTRACTS

AID - ASSISTANCE TO AID CONTRACTOR US VOLUNTARY ORGANZIATIONS WHICH MAY WISH TO EXTEND THEIR PROGRAMS TO MALDIVES.

PEACE CORPS - ASSISTANCE TO ANY PEACE CORPOS VOLUNTEERS WHO MAY BE ASSIGNED TO MALDIVES.

J. EXPRESSED GOM INTEREST IN CONSULAR AGENCY MALDIVE OFFICIALS HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR INTEREST IN THE OPENING OF A CONSULAR AGENCY AND ARE AWAITING A DIPLOMATIC NOTE FROM THIS EMBASSY COMMUNICATING A FORMAL REQUEST.

K. GOM REPRESENTATION IN THE US

GOM MAINTAINS NO REPRESENTATION IN THE UNITED STATES OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY. ITS SOLE REPRESENTATIONIS AT THE UNITED NATIONS AND IT DOES NOT JOINTLY ACCREDIT ITS UN MISSION PER-

SONNEL TO ANY OTHER COUNTRIES. THE GOM AT ONE TIME DID MAINTAIN AN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON BUT CLOSED IT IN ACCORD WITH ITS WORLDWIDE POLICY OF CONSERVING FOREIGN EXCHANGE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES.

L. FOREIGN REPRESENTATION IN THE MALDIVES

EMBASSIES ARE MAINTAINED AT MALE BY INDIA, LIBYA AND PAKISTAN. OTHER GOVERNMENTS SHOWN ON GOM DIPLOMATIC LIST AS HAVING REPRESENTATIVES ACCREDITED INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING, ALL RESIDENT IN COLOMBO UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED: AUSTRALIA, BURMA, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, EGYPT, FRANCE, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, INDONESIA, IRAN, IRAQ, ITALY, JAPAN, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA (RESIDENT KADAKARTA), REPUBLIC OF KOREA, MALAYSIA, NEW ZEALAND (RESIDENT SINGAPORE), PHILIPPINES, UNITED KINGDOM, USA, USSR, YUGOSLAVIA; UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, COLOMBO PLAN.

M. RELATIONSHIP OF PROPOSED CONSULAR AGENCY MALE WITH EMBASSY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COLOMBO

WE ARE PREPARED TO SUPERVISE NEW CONSULAR AGENCY AND PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.

N. AVAILABILITY OF OFFICE SPACE AND COMMUNICATION

WE WOULD HOPE TO INITIALLY OPEN MALE CONSULAR AGENCY ON THE RESIDENTIAL PREMISES OF CONSULAR AGENT THEREBY DEFERRING OFFICE SPACE RENTAL COST. IF SEPARATE QUARTERS BECAME NECESSARY, WE ANTICIPATE RENTAL OF LESS THAN \$100 PER MONTH. WE WOULD INSTALL TELEX IMMEDIATELY UPON OPENING AGENCY IN ORDER TO SOLVE GRAVE COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEM BETWEEN COLOMBO AND MALE. RENTAL IS \$50 PER MONTH PLUS MESSAGE COST.

O. PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

NONE WOULD BE CLAIMED FOR MALDIVIAN CONSULAR AGENT. WE WOULD REQUEST FREE ENTRY FOR FURNISHINGS AND MATERIALS FOR CONSULAR AGENCY AND INVIOABILITY FOR POUCH AND CONSULAR AGENCY RECORDS.

P. AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLIES

WE WOULD EXPECT TO FULFILL ALL MALE CONSULAR AGENCY MODEST SUPPLY NEEDS FROM EMBASSY COLOMBO.

Q. RANK AND SIZE OF POST

WE DEFER TO DEPARTMENT TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATE RANK OF PROPOSED MALE CONSULAR AGENCY WITH FUNCTIONS INDICATED. RESPONSIBILITIES WOULD BE LIMITED TO CONSULAR DISTRICT OF REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES.

R. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

1. PERSONNEL - ONE CONSULAR AGENT; SALARY TO BE IN ACCORD WITH RANK FIXED BY DEPARTMENT;

2. FUNDS - FUNDS IN AN AMOUNT TO BE DETERMINED WOULD BE ADVANCED TO THE CONSULAR AGENT BY THE DISBURSING OFFICER, EMBASSY IN COLOMBO, TO MEET EMERGENCIES AND PAYMENT OF ROUTINE EXPENSES.

3. SUPPLIES - EXPENDABLES SUCH AS STATIONERY WOULD BE

FORWARDED FROM EMBASSY COLOMBO CONSULAR SECTION SUPPLIES
AS NEEDED.

4. EQUIPMENT - EMBASSY COLOMBO WILL FURNISH EQUIPMENT
FROM PRESENT INVENTORY.

WRIGGINS

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Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
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SAS ID: 3565249
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONSULAR AGENT IN MALDIVES
TAGS: CGEN, AMGT, CE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/26fea2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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